

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE AMARNA LETTERS TOWARDS A STUDY OF SYRO-PALESTINIAN SOCIAL STRUCTURE (1). TERMINOLOGY FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

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ABSTRACT

Egyptian domination under the 18th and 19th Dynasties deeply influenced political and social life in Syria and Palestine. The correspondence between Egypt and her vassals in Syria and Palestine in the Amarna age, first half of the fourteenth century B.C., preserved for us in the Amarna letters, written in cuneiform on clay tablets discovered in 1887, offer several terms that can shed light on the social structure during the Late Bronze Age. In the social stratification of Syria and Palestine under Egyptian rule according to the Amarna letters, three classes are discernible: 1) government officials and military personnel, 2) free people, and 3) half-free people and slaves. In this study, I shall limit myself to the first, the upper class. **This article deals with terminology for government officials.**

INTRODUCTION

The correspondence between Egypt and her vassals in Syria and Palestine in the Amarna age (first half of the fourteenth century B.C.) offers several terms that can shed light on the social structure during the Late Bronze Age.¹

Similar documents have been discovered in Palestine (Albright 1966:3; Edzard 1985) and recently at Kāmid el-Lōz.² Supplemented by these and other discoveries,

¹ My unpublished doctoral dissertation (Muntingh 1963), written in Afrikaans, is based mainly on the evidence of the Amarna letters, and all the Ugaritic texts available until that date. For Ugarit see the dissertation of Rainey (1967) and his many articles, published afterwards. See further Albright (1966:11–20, on Palestine), Drower (1968, on Ugarit) and (1969:3–25, on Syria, circa 1550–1400 B.C., and the Amarna age, warfare and society); Heltzer (1969); Spence (2013); Mynářová (2013) and Kemp (2012). Contrary to the “vassal” correspondence (Moran 1992:xxvi–xxxiii) the Amarna letters include also international correspondence (Moran 1992:xxii–xxvi; cf. Cohen and Westbrook 2000). For excellent background information about the Amarna age, see van der Westhuizen (1995). See also Barnett (1968:12–15) for photos of EA 61, 72, 282, 299, 325, and 330.

² Edzard (1970:55–62, letters nos. 1–4=KL 69:277, 279, 100, 278; 1976:62–67, letter no. 6=KL 74:300); 1980:52–54, no. 7=KL 78:200, a fragment of an exercise text?; 1985:250

especially the archives of Ugarit, Alalakh, Mari and Ebla – the last dating from the Early Bronze Age – by the middle of the third millennium B.C. the broad outlines of Syro-Palestinian social stratification over a long period is emerging. These outlines can be extended to the Old Testament as the Israelites established themselves in Palestine within the next two centuries. In this paper, I shall limit myself to the vassal correspondence that includes more than three hundred letters.

Egyptian domination under the 18th and 19th Dynasties deeply influenced political and social life in Syria and Palestine.³ While no single word is used in the ancient texts to define Syria-Palestine as a political or geographical entity, the nearest approach to an all-embracing term is the Egyptian *Retenu*, or *Lōtān*, used in the New Kingdom as in the Middle Kingdom as a general designation for territories north of Egypt (Drower 1970:10). Egyptian government, which deteriorated during the Amarna age as is generally accepted (see, however, Gevirtz 1973:163, n. 8), exacted heavy tribute and *corvée*, cf. p. 817, from a demoralised population. The aristocracy was impoverished. The Amarna letters also reveal the demoralisation of the ethos of the Egyptian officials, who made themselves guilty of bribery and corruption.

The situation in contemporary Ugarit from where some Amarna letters were sent (EA 45–49; see Albright 1944b:30–33), was different. Although Ugarit was within the Egyptian sphere of influence early in the fourteenth century, she remained to a great extent independent with her own hereditary kingship, even when she became a Hittite vassal. One of the results thereof, contrary to Syria and Palestine under Egyptian rule, was a well-developed guild system.

For a representation of Syro-Palestinian social structure under normal conditions, we should rather consult the archive discovered at Ugarit, as the vassal correspondence from the Amarna archive reflects an abnormal situation. On the other hand, Liverani correctly points out that a careful reading of the letters of the Syro-Palestinian vassals to the pharaoh, the pharaoh's failure to respond, his annoyance

and 256 n. 14); Wilhelm (1973:69–75, letter no. 5=KL 72:600); Rainey (1976:337–41 on KL 72:600); Hachmann (1982:18ff.); Metzger (1975).

³ See, inter alia, Albright (1957:206ff.; 1966:7–11); Mohammed (1959); Helck (1960; 1962:109ff.); Klengel (1969a, 1969b, 1970:179–217); Kitchen (1969); Drower (1970:50–65); Bernhardt (1971); Weinstein (1981); Hachmann (1982); Singer (1991:138ff.).

with Rib-haddi who wrote more letters than all the other vassals, and Rib-haddi's own negative attitude, reveals that the Amarna age was not so abnormal as is often accepted. If we reckon with the specific characteristics of the epistolary genre, the Egyptian bureaucratic administration who knew the local situation and could assess it realistically in relation to Egyptian interests while a local ruling class incessantly tried to draw advantages from the relationship with the dominant power in order to attain local political ends, we have a normal situation (Liverani 1971:253–268, especially 266–268; cf. 1967:1–18, 1972:184–188 and 2001:303–311). But that precisely this attitude on both sides led to opportunism and disruption in society cannot be denied, in which case Liverani's alternative for "normality", namely "permanent abnormality", (*anormalità permanente*), is a good characterisation of the period.

In order to define the social terminology in the Amarna letters, one has to keep in mind that the Akkadian of these letters contains many archaisms which are no longer to be found in contemporary Babylonia, but do occur in Old Babylonian, especially in the letters written by Amorite scribes of the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries B.C. in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia. The language of the Amarna letters was a scholastic and diplomatic jargon, the use of which had become acceptable for written communication between Canaanites and foreigners, as well among Canaanites.⁴ The vernacular of the local scribes was Canaanite so that some the letters abound with

⁴ Gordon (1947:2); Albright (1966:4); Rainey (1976); Muntingh (1991:158–175). Forms last attested in native Akkadian sources around the middle of the twentieth century B.C. were preserved over 600 years in Western Peripheral Akkadian in the schools of Egypt, south Palestine and Ugarit (Moran 1973:50–53). Kühne studied the international correspondence of El-Amarna and stated that, except for three letters, the Amarna letters were written in Middle Babylonian Akkadian, i.e., the international language of communication. The purest Middle Babylonian is to be found in the letters that originated from Babylonia. He further distinguishes between Hurro-Akkadian, Canaanite-Akkadian and Egypto-Akkadian in the letters (Kühne 1973:5–12). Izre'el, in his linguistic analysis of the Gezer letters of the El-Amarna archive, emphasises that the Amarna language is only a written language, not intended to be spoken, therefore there is no need to normalise the Sumerograms (Izre'el 1978:16, 17). Recently, Izre'el (1985) studied the Akkadian dialect of the scribes of Amurru in the fourteenth to thirteenth centuries B.C. as an important offshoot of Western Peripheral Akkadian, for which he utilised, inter alia, 18 Amarna letters. For the form and value of the signs in different areas, see Schroeder's edition of the texts (Schroeder 1915b:73–94).

Canaanitisms. When they referred to certain Egyptian officials, they had to resort to vague Akkadian concepts, Canaanite glosses or Egyptian words. Most probably, they pronounced the Sumerograms in Canaanite, as to a large extent seems to be the case with so-called Old Canaanite (Eblaite) in Ebla in North Syria, a millennium earlier (Gelb 1981:11, 13; Pettinato 1981:57). A good illustration is the Canaanite gloss *sūkinu* to *rābišu* (*lú MAŠKIM*) “commissioner” in EA 256:9; 362:69 of which the Hebrew is *sōkēn* (*HAL:713*); see below.

In the social stratification of Syria and Palestine under Egyptian rule, according to the Amarna letters, three classes may be discerned: 1) government officials and military personnel; 2) free people; and 3) half-free people and slaves. In this article, I shall limit myself to the first, the upper class.

Each kingdom taken over by Egypt was, in general, allowed to retain its ruler (*ḥazannu*) from the local aristocracy, but then as a vassal of Egypt and under military supervision. Placed in general control of the vassals and responsible for the coordination of the administration of the whole Retenu were the viceroys or commissioners, called *rābišu*, *šākinu* (*šākin māti*) or in Canaanite *sūkinu*. There were also other Egyptian officials. The aim of the Egyptian administration was twofold: to keep the vassal countries from rebellion, and to extract from them the maximum possible revenue. During the Amarna age, Retenu was divided into three administrative districts, namely Amurru in the north, Upu, the central district, and Canaan in the south. Each district was under the jurisdiction of a *rābišu* who had his residence in the district capital, respectively Šumur, Kumidi and Gaza (Helck 1960:6–9; Aharoni 1967:152, 157ff.); Kitchen (1969:80–81). Most of the *rābisūtu*, known to us from Amarna letters, have Egyptian names but they could also be Canaanites (Helck 1962:256ff.; Drower 1970:55). Before the various titles of officials are studied in detail, three particular aspects need to be accentuated.

(1) Language change in history

The evolution of a language through time is most conveniently described in terms of two distinct, but related features: function and form. Limiting

ourselves for the moment to spoken language, we may define the primary function of language as communication. It is virtually axiomatic that a language, in order to serve the communication needs of a given community effectively, must keep pace with cultural changes within that community (Albright-Lambdin 1966:13).

An offshoot of Akkadian – indicated by scholars as Peripheral Akkadian – became the *lingua franca* and the vehicle for international diplomacy (Muntingh 1995:162). However, many of the letters of the vassals abound with Canaanitisms; several terms have an Egyptian origin, and even Hurrian influence can be detected. Some terms are glossed. Several titles that functioned in the Amarna age appeared already in Old Babylonian four centuries earlier of which the main texts give ample evidence, but in a different context and semantic field. Von Soden (1994:50–55) briefly outlines the Old Babylonian period (1950–1530 B.C.) and the following period between 1530 and 1000 B.C. which includes the Amarna age.

(2) Conceptualisation

The ever-changing communication needs of a community will be reflected in its language, and consequently in forming new concepts. Two Assyriology giants, Benno Landsberger (1976) and his student, Wolfram von Soden (1974), expressed this respectively by the terms *Eigenbegrifflichkeit* (conceptual anatomy), and *Begriffsbildung* (conceptualisation).

(3) Phonological change

The form and structure of a language may change, as may the pronunciation of words. Moran (1960:59) pointed out that in Northwest Semitic languages, which include Canaanite and Hebrew, change took place. The long *â* became *ô* in most of the Canaanite speaking groups south of Ugarit in the period between 1700–1375 B.C. Short vowels were much more susceptible to mutation, and after the Amarna period final short vowels were generally lost, Moran concludes. For the vowel shift *a>o* see also Böhl (1909 par. 13d) and Dotan (1971).

These three aspects can now be illustrated by a prominent title in the Amarna letters, namely *rābisu*.

Akkadian	Canaanite	Hebrew
<p><i>rābišu</i> (MAŠKIM) G part. active sg. of the verb <i>rabāšu</i> “to lie”, in EA 141:62 an ibex lying 1 Part active as substantive: “der lagert, laurt”, and thus “Sachwalter, Kommissär) (AHw:933, 935)</p>	<p>Glosses In EA 321:15 ra-bi-iš is a gloss to lúMAŠKIM. Is <i>rābiu</i> itself a Canaanite word like <i>sūkinu</i>? (Youngblood 1961:31) See Knudtzon’s note a to 321:15 and 131:21 note q on the writing of the ideogram of lúMAŠKIM with the gloss ma-lik MEŠ, “counsellors”</p>	<p><i>rōbēš</i> (Gen 4:7) <i>qal</i> part. active sg. of the verb <i>rbs</i> “to lie down, couch” (of animals and people). GKC par.145u regards <i>rōbēš</i> in Gen 4:7 <i>ḥaṭṭat rōbēs</i> as a substantival participle (a lurker, a coucher) accepted by HAL:1102: “die Sünde ist ein Lauerer– die Sünde die lauert” and also Brockelmann (par.107a, 121c) “vor der Tür lauert die Sünde” or “an der Tur lagert die Sünde”. Youngblood (1961:31) however is puzzled by the phrase <i>ḥaṭṭat</i> (fem) <i>rōbēš</i> (mase) and therefore as MAŠKIM = <i>rābišu</i> meant in Sumero-Akkadian also “demon”, he translates the phrase “Guilt is a demon (watchman) at the door” with which Speiser (1964:33) agrees.</p>
<p><i>Sakānu</i> “care for” (Ebeling EAT:1499; AHw:1011) “to dwell”, see Moran (1992:xxvi) who cites Durand: <i>sakānu</i>, a West Semitic verb, “to dwell”</p>	<p>Participle su-ki-ni 256:9 (Ebeling <i>idem</i>) “Vorsteher” (Ebeling), “resident” (Durand), one who provides” (Moran) EA 362:69 <i>sù-ki-ná</i></p>	<p><i>Sōkinu</i> (Hebrew><i>sōkēn</i> Isaiah 22:15 “steward”</p>
<p><i>malāku II</i> “advise, care for” (Ebeling EAT:1461; AHw:593_s.v. ma-la-ku II Amarna: “sich kummeren”</p>	<p>G participle plural <i>ma-lik</i> MEŠ of which the singular is <i>māliku(m)</i> from <i>malāku II</i>: “Ratgeber, Berater”. (AHw:595): “counselor” (Moran)</p>	<p>In Hebrew the verb <i>mlk</i> I “to rule” (HAL:558–559); <i>mélék</i>– “king” corresponds to Akkadian <i>malāku III</i> “to rule” (AHw:594); <i>malku</i> (m)I, <i>māliku(m)</i> “ruler, king” (AHw:595). In Hebrew the only example of <i>mlk</i> “to advise” is the <i>nif.</i> impf <i>wayyimālék</i> “to take counsel with oneself” (Neh 5:7) of which <i>mèlèk III</i> “advice” (conjured) is derived.</p>

We can now summarise our study of the title *rābiṣu* and its glosses as follows:

Verbal root <i>rbṣ</i> : <i>rabāṣu</i> “lie down, couch”	Akkadian G participle active singular <i>rābiṣu</i> “commissioner”	Canaanite gloss	Hebrew <i>qal</i> participle active singular <i>rōbēṣ</i> (Gen 4:7) “a lurker, coucher”
<i>skn</i> : <i>sakānu</i> “care for, dwell”	<i>sākinu</i> “caretaker”	<i>sūkinu</i> “caretaker, provider”	* <i>sōkinu</i> <i>sōkēn</i> (<i>sōkēn</i> Isa 22:15) “steward, administrator”
<i>mlk</i> : <i>malāku</i> “advise, care for”	<i>māliku</i> “adviser, caretaker”	<i>ma – lik</i> _MEŠ sg. <i>māliku</i> “adviser, caretaker”	<i>mēlék</i> (conjecture) “adviser” Not <i>molek</i> (HAL:560)

We can now conclude:

- (1) Language changes in history: The Amarna letters furnish proof of language change in history. Peripheral Akkadian, mentioned above as being the international language of communication, was adapted to serve in written form the needs of officials in Palestine and Syria under Egyptian sovereignty. (Compare the function and form of English, now the global *lingua franca*, for communication in South Africa.)
- (2) Conceptualisation: It is interesting to notice how very common actions such as to lie down, couch, care for and to advise, served to form new concepts and thus as titles for Egyptian officials.
- (3) Phonological change: Vowel shift *ā>ô* and final short vowels were lost: *rābiṣu>rōbēṣ*; *sākinu>sūkinu>sōkinu>sōkēn* and *māliku>mēlèk*.

TERMINOLOGY FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN SYRIA AND PALESTINE UNDER EGYPTIAN RULE

Rābišu, “commissioner”⁵

The term is written in the Amarna letters either with the Sumerogram ^{lú}MASKIM or syllabic, with the plural *rābišutu* (Böhl 1909:8, 34). The old Sumerian term ^{lú}MASKIM (Akkadian *rābisū*) was a common title for officials.⁶

The Egyptian commissioners, as representatives of the pharaoh in Syria and Palestine, supervised the native princes. The commissioners not only had to accomplish primarily administrative duties, but also military duties, for which there were military forces at hand. From the district capitals a trained bureaucracy, a hierarchy of officials, ruled the Asiatic possessions of the pharaoh (Campbell 1960:21, 22; cf. Edgerton 1947:160). Unfortunately, this bureaucracy was notoriously corrupt, as we have seen.

The pharaoh appointed the commissioners to govern particular cities or each of the three districts. Abi-milku of Tyre writes to his Egyptian overlord: *šarru bēliya ipqidni*

⁵ See Weber *EAT*:1226, “Gouverneur” and Ebeling *EAT*:1495 “Vorsteher”; Rainey *EAS*:76 “commissioner”; *AHW*:935 “Sachwalter, Kommissär”; Albright (1966:7) “commissioner”. Drower (1970:54–55) renders *rābisū* “overseer”, but also uses the terms “viceroy”, “commissioner” and “governor” in this connection. Kühne (1973:85 n. 421) states: “Eine gewisse Verunklärung des Begriffes rührt daher, dass der Titel, der eigentlich wohl nur dem obersten Provinzbeamten zukam, verallgemeinert für die gehobene ägyptische Beamtschaft Syrien-Palästinas benutzt wurde, bzw. werden konnte”. EA 256:9 glosses *rābišū* with *sakinu* (*sū-ki-ni*) “Statthalter, Pfleger, Verweser” that is to be connected with the highest provincial official as in EA 7:77. The Egyptian equivalent would have been “Overseer of all (Northern) Countries”. Cf. Goetze (1965:4). For the relation between *rābišu*, *šākin māti* and *pamaḥu/a* (*p3-mḥ-ib*) see section “Šākin māti as a synonym for *rābišu* ...” below. See van der Westhuizen (1995:208–210). Thureau-Dangin (1922:100) translates lu PA.TUR in EA 367:8 with “le commissaire” and Dossin (1934:126) renders *lú TUR* (EA 369:6) with “le commandant (des troupes)”; see his remark (1934:130). Albright (1943c:29 with n. 8) transliterated the same sign, copied on p. 30, as *awil rābisa* (!) “commissioner”, but elsewhere (1946:11 n. 5 he) corrected himself and read *lú akil tarbaši*, “chief of the stable” (1946:11 no. 9), a military term that will be discussed below. Thus the term *rābišu* is eliminated in EA 367:8, 369:6, supported by Rainey (1978:36, 40, 62).

⁶ Deimel (1928:443 par 12). For Babylon I see Krückman (1928:450 par. 18). For the readings of MASKIM (*rābišu*) in the West see Buccellati (1963:224–228) and Oppenheim (1968:177–178).

ana <na>- šār Šurri amat šarri ... anāku^{lu} rābiš šarri bēliya, “The king, my lord has appointed me to guard Tyre, the king’s handmaiden ... I am the commissioner of the king, my lord” (EA 149:9–10, 14). For *<na>sār* see Rainey (1967:54; 133 n. 135.) EA 107:20–24 probably describes the ceremony where a new commissioner received a ring in the presence of the pharaoh’s governors (Weber *EAT*:1204; Mercer 1939:361). In a reinterpretation of the text, Moran (1975:155–156; 1992:181 n. 3) translates: “appoint as its (Šumur’s) commissioner someone respected by the king’s mayors”. Thus, at the investiture of the commissioner, Rib-haddi shows his concern for the qualifications of the candidate: he should be respected (DUGUD: *kabtu*). “Such a candidate might also be described as someone likely to be *kabta ina pāni ḥazānāti šarri* (cf. *gādôl lipnê* in Hebrew)”. Read *kabta* instead of *kabla*, both on Moran (1975:156), and correctly in Moran (1992:181 n. 2).

Sometimes there is no clear distinction in the letters between *rābišu* and *rabû* (Weber *EAT*:1188) as the comparison of EA 139:14–16 with 140:10–14 and 103:13, 15, 21 with 104:28, 34 reveal. In EA 103 and 104 Rib-haddi obviously points to the same person when applying the terms *rabû* and *rābišu* respectively. In EA 189:13, 14, however, different groups are indicated (^{lu} *rabû* and ^{lu} *rābiš šarri*; both in the plural).

The governors (*ḥazannūtu*) repeatedly requested the commissioners to send troops (EA 60:10–17), and to give witness that the governors were able rulers (lines 20ff.). As to their functions, commissioners had to keep order in the districts in which they were installed and therefore they had to dispose of military power (Albright 1966:7; Drower 1970:54–55). Continuous contact between the commissioners and the Egyptian troops in Syria and Palestine was essential. Commissioners marched out with the army of archers (EA 93:15–17; 191:7–13) and could even be officers (see the discussion of *iḥripita* below). Yidya, prince of Ashkelon, blamed Reanapa, appointed as commissioner by the pharaoh himself, of negligence in protecting the king’s country (EA 326:13–17; cf. 292:36–38). During the turbulent Amarna age military power was imperative for the commissioners to survive, and yet some were killed.

An important means to establish Egyptian authority was the education of the sons of local chieftains in Egypt. In EA 296, a letter of Yaḥturu, he describes how he was

brought by commissioner Yanḥamu to the Egyptian court as a boy where he “stood at the city gate of the king” (lines 25–29). Yaḥtiru, probably a city-ruler in southern Palestine, assured the pharaoh that he would remain loyal as Yanḥamu could confirm (lines 20–24). Yanḥamu succeeded to make Yaḥtiru permanently subject to the Egyptian throne. Likewise Rib-haddi, the regent of Byblos, remained loyal, despite Egyptian indifference, but his Egyptian education estranged him from his people, a fact that led to distrust and rejection (Drower 1970:52–53; cf. Albright 1966:5). Rib-haddi adopts the pattern of the “righteous suffer”, however without historical evidence (Liverani 1973:184–186.)

Three glosses help us to understand what the term *rābiṣu* meant to the scribes.

Sūkinu*, as a gloss to *rābiṣu

In a letter of Mut-ba ʿlu, prince of Pella to Yanḥamu, a military commandant in all Syria-Palestine, who also held the office of *rābiṣu*, *sú-ki-ni* glosses the plural of *rābiṣū* (EA 256:9). In 362:69, part of a letter of Rib-haddi, *sú-ki-na* glosses ^{lu}MASKIM.⁷ Winckler already recognised it to be the equivalent of the Hebrew *sōkēn*,⁸ that in Isaiah 22:15 has the meaning “steward”. Verses 21ff. refer to the office. In the feminine, the term indicates “nurse, maid-servant” (1 Kings 1:2, 4).⁹

⁷ For the text and translation of EA 362:69 see *EAS*:18, 19. See *AHw*:1055, *CAD* S:354 s.v. *sūkinu*. *Sūkini* (*sōkini*)/*sūkina* is an old Canaanite particle active. See Ebeling (1910:59 para. 9; cf. p. 42 para. 2); Dhorme (1951:431); Friedrich (1951:60 para. 140); *EAS*:77 s.v. *sakānu*. Kühne (1973:85) renders EA 256:9 *sakinu* (*sú-ki-ni*), “Statthalter, Pfleger, Verweser”; cf. Goetze (1965:4). For EA 256 and 362 see now Moran (1992:309, 360 resp.). In Moran (1992:xxvi n. 70) he states that EA 256:9 and 362:69 *rābiṣū* is glossed by *sú-ki-ni* and *sú-ki-na* respectively West Semitic *sōkinu* (Hebrew *sōkēn*) in his opinion “one who provides”.

⁸ Weber *EAT*:1318. Cf. Albright 1966:7.

⁹ *KBL*:658, with cognates in other languages. See also **sāgān* or **segen* (*KBL*:649). For Ugaritic *skn*, *sa-ki-ni* = Hebrew *sōkēn* see Gordon (1965:449, No. 1754), and Alt (1959b:192 where *skn* is connected with the Canaanite gloss *sūkinu*. See further Donner-Röllig (1964:211–12) on *skn*, a high Aramaic official of the kingdom of Hamath. Recently Tropper (2008:110) translates the Ugaritic term *skn* and cognates with “(hoher) Verwaltungsbeampter, Präfekt”. For *sōkēnēt* in 1 Kings 1:2, 4 see Mulder (1972:43–54), with reference to El-Amarna, especially pp. 44, 45.

Isaiah 22:15 mentions Shebna, a high official of king Hezekiah, who was a *sōkēn*, “steward”, and *‘ašer ‘al-habbāyit*, “who is over the household”, and a *sōfēr*, “scribe, secretary” (2 Kings 18:18; 19:2; Isaiah 36:3) The Hebrew *sōkēn* filled a high dignified and influential position: court marshal, head of the royal intendancy, administrator and minister of finance. Primarily his function was of internal importance for the royal household to ensure the smooth course of daily events. This explains why the position of one “over the household” is so often mentioned not only in the Bible, but also on one of the Lachish seals, and which may be compared with the dignity of Joseph in Egypt as viceroy and vizier (Snyders 1969:218). For Joseph as vizier in Egypt see below. Shebna, although a man of wealth and influence – in fact a *nouveau riche* and parvenu whose genealogy is obscure – is rebuked by the prophet Isaiah for preparing a conspicuously monumental rock-hewn tomb near the royal tombs, and predicted his downfall (Isaiah 22:15–19). The early Hebrew inscription (seventh century B.C.), discovered at Siloam, Jerusalem, forms the lintel of the tomb of [Shebna]-yahu, a royal steward, “he who is over the house” (Wisemann 1982:1099; cf. Barnett 1968 no.17, “The Tomb of Shebna, a Royal Steward”).

For the importance of Shebna’s position as *sōfēr*, “scribe”, see section on the scribe (tupšarru) below, and compare the tomb of Any, a scribe, at Amarna (cf. for the same information in Part 2 forthcoming).

Hazannu as a gloss to rābišu

Normally a clear distinction is made between the office of the *rābisu* and that of the *ḥazannu*, though we have something of both in the person of Abi-milku. In *EA* 317:21, however, *rābišu* (^{lu}MASKIM) is glossed by *ḥa-za-ni-ka*. Do we here have a reference to Maya, who like Yanḥamu, was a *rābišu* and a military commandant in all Syria and Palestine (see Weber *EAT* 1297; Campbell 1964:75–76, cf. 128, 135; Helck 1939:38)? Only in *EA* 337:27 is the full Sumerogram ^{lu}MASKIM used for Maya. It may be that an Egyptian of the status of Maya could also act as *ḥazannu*, but Artzi (1968:167) regards *EA* 317:21 as an example of the disuse of the *Glossenkeil*.

Mālik mes šarri as a gloss to rābišu

Rib-haddi writes to the pharaoh that the enemy has turned against the commissioners after the death of Pawura. In EA 131:21 ^{1ú} ^{mes} *rābišu* is followed by the gloss *mālik* ^{mes} *šarri*. Weber (*EAT:1225*) argues, after comparing EA 131:34–38 with 132:36–43, that Paḥamnata in 131 is identical with Pawira in 132, and that *rābišu* = *mālik šarri* = Pawi[ra] (Knudtzon: ^l*pa-wa-[ra]*, 132:38; cf. 131:22 with the latter, also a title). There is, however, a clear distinction between Pawuru (formerly read as Pawira) and Paḥamnata in EA 131 (Moran 1992:212–213). Furthermore, he regards *malku* as the city-king, responsible to the Great King, and equivalent to Hebrew *mèlèk*, “king”, but not to the Assyrian, i.e. Akkadian, *māliku*, “counselor”. The term ^{lu} *milku* has the same meaning in EA 51:14 where ^{lu} *mi-il-ka-šu* is translated “one counselor of his” (*CAD* MII:67 s.v. *milku*). Ebeling (*EAT:1462* s.v. *maliku*, resp. *malku*) renders “ruler, counselor”. Albright, however, accepts the Akkadian meaning of the word and translates *mālik šarri* “royal counselor” (1946:19 no. 45) which is consistent with his statement that the princes or governors (*ḥazannūtu*) were called “kings” in Canaanite circles (Akkadian *šarru*, Canaanite *milku*; 1966:8). *AHw:595* s.v. *māliku(m)* gives the Akkadian meaning “Ratgeber, Berater”, which expresses the function of a *rābišu* well. Rib-haddi of Byblos warns the king against ʿAbdi-aširta and asks a royal commissioner to give him advice (EA 94:66–72). The verb in line 72 is (*l*)*i*-(*m*)*a*-*lik*, derived from *malāku*, “advise, take care of”.¹⁰ Elsewhere he desired that the king should send his commissioner to give a verdict in a lawsuit between a certain Yapīʿ-adda and himself (EA 113:11–18; para. D, line 18. See Moran 1950:82, 83; Campbell 1964:81). The gloss *mālik šarri* to *rābišu*, “commissioner”, is to be rendered “counselor of the king” (Moran 1992:212).

¹⁰ *EAT:1461–1462* s.v. *malāku*; *AHw:593* s.v. *malāku(m) II*; *CAD* MI:156:3 s.v. *malāku* A. Add here EA 364:27; see *EAS:70*, Rainey (1978:80). See my discussion of the root *mlk* in some Ebla texts (Muntingh 1984).

Muṣal(l)il šarri*, “Feather-bearer on the right of the king”,¹¹ honorary title of a *rābiṣu

Yanḫamu, a military commandant who also acted as *rābiṣu* (cf. Drower 1970:55) figured prominently in the affairs of Byblos and Palestine during the middle period of Amarna correspondence. He bore an extremely important title, *muṣa(l)il šarri* (EA 106:38), which some scholars interpret as the Egyptian title of someone who enjoyed a high reputation as the king’s close friend and adviser. The official could be responsible for sheltering of the troops (de Koning 1940:164, 165; he is, however, aware of the above-mentioned explanation). In Egypt, the feather-bearer could function in a military context (cf. Montet 1958:224). On an occasion on which the king honoured a loyal soldier and standard-bearer, an officer, one of the king’s fan-bearers, handed to the honoured soldier a new standard.

A somewhat different explanation is that of Oppenheim (1947:7–11) who discusses the phrase *ina šilli ša šarri*, “in the shadow of the king” in Assyrian and Babylonian letters. The phrase indicates that someone belongs to the immediate entourage of the king. *Šillu*, “shadow” is often used to express protection (CAD S:190–192). Thus the *muṣal(l)il šarri*, the feather-bearer, stood as it were in the shadow of the king, being his confidant with intimate knowledge of state affairs, and powerful in Palestine and Syria. Compare the Hebrew *b’šêl šaddai* “in the shadow of the Almighty” (Ps 91:1).

¹¹ Weber EAT:1171 a title “Wedelträger” or a “Wedelträger zur Rechten des Königs” (Ranke, Erman); Albright (1946:13 no. 13a with a possible Egyptian equivalent, and 1966:6). Cf. Helck (1939:39; changed in 1960:7 n. 38; 1962:259); Campbell (1960:16; 1964:76, 90ff.). *AHw*:1110 derives the term from *šullulu(m)*, nA *šallulu*, “überdachen (mit = Akk.), ü berdecken”; cf. CAD S:239–240 s.v. *šullulu* A, “to roof (a building), to put on top”; but the title is obscure. Edel (1953:57 no. 5), with reference to a high official *Sthy*, bearing the title “Feather-bearer on the right of the king”, just like the powerful Yanḫamu, translates *muṣal(l)il šarri* “Beschatter des Königs”. For the role of Yanḫamu see Hachman (1982:42–46). Moran translates “Yanḫamu parasol-bearer of the king” (1992:179 with n. 9 on p. 180), followed by Murnane (2000:108, 251 n. 51) on Yanḫamu’s status in the pharaoh’s administration with Egyptian *ḥbsw-bht*, “fan-bearer” as the origin of the title. A tomb scene in an Amarna temple shows fan-bearer Ahmose carrying the ostrich-feather fan to which an axe is tied (Kemp 2012:211; cf. Gardiner (1950:474, H6). Traditional temples in New Kingdom Egypt received pious gifts, e.g., a hieroglyphic inscription (Kemp 2012:107, 3.20) bears a private dedication devoted to the temple.

Šākin māti as a synonym for rābišu and the Egyptian pamaḥu/a (p3-mḥ-’ib)

Elmar Edel discusses the term *šākin māti* as it functions in a somewhat later time in the administration of Ramesses II (1953:55–61; cf. Helck 1962:258). During this period, Syria and Palestine under Egyptian control were divided into two administrative districts, Upu in the Damascus region, and Kinaḥḥi, that roughly corresponded to the three districts in the Amarna age. Each district had its own governor, called *šākin māti*. Burnaburiaš of Babylon, in a letter to Amenophis IV, complains that his caravans have been robbed, the first time by Biryawaza, and the second time by *’pa-ma-ḥu[-u]* [*šak*]i-in ma-ti-ka ša ma-at ki-iš-ri, “Pamaḥa, a governor of thy land, of a land under thy military power” (EA 7:76–77; see Albright 1937:200 n. 4; *AHW* 1141 s.v. *šaknu(m)*) with *pamaḥu/a* (= *p3-mḥ-’ib*) probably the Egyptian equivalent for both *šākin māti* and *rābišu*, “commissioner”.¹² The land mentioned in line 77 may be Kinaḥḥi. Biryawaza (line 75) was the prince of the Damascus region, and the official mentioned with him may be from Upu (EA 129:82, 84; the reading of the place name here is uncertain). Edel surmises that the *šākin māti*

¹² The Egyptian demonstrative pronoun *p3* (*pa-*) “this” had merely the force of the definite article “the” (Gardiner 1950:87). Albright (1937:200 no. 4; cf. 1946:18 no. 42) suggested that *pamaḥu/ā* = *p3-mḥ-ib*, “commissioner” (lit “plenipotentiary”) is the Egyptian equivalent of Amarna *rābišu* to which the Babylonian term *šaknu* corresponds. Cf. Edel (1948:13); *EAS*:75; Hess (1985:164). The Egyptian term *p3-mḥ-ib* is also equivalent to the Akkadian *šakin māti*. Helck (1962:466) does not support Albright and Edel, but agrees with Edel (1948:24) that *pa-ma-ḥu[-u]* in EA 7:76 = *p3-n-mhy.t* is a personal name. See Helck (1962:468 n. 10 and for further suggestions pp. 260, 261). Rainey accepts the derivation of *pamahā* “commissioner” from the Egyptian *p3 mḥ-ib*, “one who is trusted” = *rābišu* (*EAS*:75; 1978:85). More recently, however, Zorn (1991:133, 137) states that historically and linguistically it is possible that the *pa-ma-ha-a* of EA 162:74 represents an Egyptianised form of West Semitic *mhr*, thus “the *mhr*” or “the soldier” (Moran 1992:251 n. 13). Cf. Rainey (1971:142 with n. 65). “Chariot warrior” (*mahar*) and Hoch (1994:133) (*mahir*). EA 162:74–75 “the soldier (*p3 mhr*) who knows vileness, who himself mocks the foreign resident (*ubāru*)”, is interpreted by Bodi (2003) as “outraging the resident-alien”, or – as Moran (1992:251 n. 13) put it, “The charge seems to refer to a serious breach of international law involving a foreign dignitary”. For *ubāru* see also *AHW*:1399 and Muntingh (1995:175). Bodi regards the Hebrew term *gēr tōšāb* for Uriah, the Hittite in 2 Sam 11 as a parallel to *ubāru*. See *HAL*:1578 s.v. *tōšāb*. Na’aman (2005) reacts on Bodi’s article and concludes: “In sum, the importance of the term *ubāru* for the study of the ancient Near Eastern international relations is the light it sheds on the Great Powers in the Late Bronze age, demonstrated by the long sojourns of foreign diplomats in the important urban centers of the other allied kingdoms”.

was the highest official in the district government, but that this title could be replaced by the more general one of *rābišu*, which was also applied to less important district functionaries. Ḥanya (Albright 1946:11 no10), a *rābišu* of the king, was sent to collect tribute from Šubandu, an Indo-Aryan chief, including 500 cattle and 20 girls to be sold in slavery in Egypt (EA 301:12–20). He, therefore, had to arrange for the transport of cattle as the *šākin māti* had to do, according to the marriage-correspondence of Ramesses II (Edel 1953:33 quotes the text).

***Akil tarbaši*, “stable overseer”**

The names of only a few commissioners who appear in the Amarna letters have been discovered on Egyptian monuments, namely Rēanapa, Suta and Maya. They were, however, officers of the highest rank of the Egyptian troops, namely the chariotry. Such an officer was termed “inspector of the stable”, or “stable master” (Egyptian *ḥry-ihw*, Akkadian *akil tarbaši*).¹³ Hoch (1994:133) quotes texts in connection with the military position of the Egyptian stable master (*ḥry – ih*).

***Iḥripita*, “officer of the archers”**

Knudtzon regards Aḥribi[t]a in EA 107:14 as a personal name. According to Ranke (1910:20) it is Egyptian, and he later relates it to the Egyptian *ḥry-pd̄t*, “Truppenoberst” (cf. *Wb* I:571). Albright (1946:14 no. 16) also regarded the term as of Egyptian origin, as above and accepted by Moran (1992:181 n. 1) who translates it with “the archer-commander”.

The *rābišu* could also hold the rank of infantry officer, such as “officer of the archers” (Egyptian *ḥry-pd̄(.t)*, *ḥry-pd̄w.t*, Akkadian *iḥripita*) who was higher than the “stable overseer”. There was a close relation between the *rābišu* and detachments of archers (Egyptian *pd̄tyw*, Akkadian *piṭātu*). The Akkadian rendering thereof would be

¹³ Written lúPA.TÙR EA 367:8; lú TÙR 369:6. See Albright (1946:11 no. 9); Edel (1948:13); Helck (1939:38); *EAS*:56. See *AHW*:1456 s.v. (*w*)*aklu(m)*, “Beauftragter, Aufseher, Inspektor”, and p. 1327 s.v. *tarba/āšu(m)*, “Viehhürde, -hof, Hof (v Gebäuden)”, and p. 1328 for this term in EA 84:13 and 357:74. *CAD* AI:279 s.v. *aklu* A:PA.TÙR in charge of military units. See now Moran (1992:365) with n. 2 (EA 367:8) and p. 366 “the stable (overseer) of the archers” (EA 369:6).

the enigmatic expression ^{lú}<PA>? TÛR ERÍN ^{meš} *pí-tá-ti* “<chief> of the stable of the archer troops”, a title of *rābisu* Ḫanya (EA 369:6; EAS:36, 37). Ḫan’i (Albright 1946:11 no. 9) was ^{lú}*akil tarbaši* (PATÛR) *ša šarri i-na* ^{kur} *Ki-na-aḫ-ḫi*, “chief of the stable of the king in Canaan”. The rank of the *rābisu* could even surpass that of the officer of the archers: “Let the military commander (*iḫripita*) stay in Šumur, but take Ḫa’ip to thy presence ... and hear his words” (EA 107:14 ff.; Albright 1946:14 no. 16; cf. 10 no. 4 but see Helck 1960:6 n. 36). Here preference is given to *rābisu* Ḫa’ip above, an *iḫripita* (*ḫry-pdt*).¹⁴

Pa-zi-[te?],”vizier”

Ri-haddi of Byblos addresses EA 71 to Ḫaya *pa-zi-[te?]* (line 1), a term that can be identified with New Kingdom *p3-t3ty*, “the vizier”. As this letter was written toward the end of the reign of Amenophis III, this Ḫaya must have been the vizier of Lower Egypt (Albright 1946:12 no. 13a; cf. AHW:852 s.v. *pazitu*). Because of his wisdom, Rib-haddi adds, the king sent him as *rābisu* (lines 4ff.).¹⁵

Recently Kemp (2012:133–134) elaborates on the duties of the Amarna vizier who was the real hub of the kingdom and the city:

Descriptions of the duties of a vizier, dating from a century beforehand, inform us that he maintained a regular daily routine of consultation with his officials over the state of the country and its resources. By means of messengers (cf. Part 2, Amarna diplomacy: messengers and envoys, forthcoming), he also kept in close contact with the leading officials of the

¹⁴ For Ḫa’ip see further Helck (1962:258); Klengel (1969a:259, n. 8), and for *iḫripita* see Edel (1953:60); Hess (1985:164).

¹⁵ Ebeling EAT:1492 *pazi* - -: *pazite* der Vezier (ägypt. *p3t3ty*). Helck (1962:257–258) regards the indication of *rābišu* Ḫaya as a vizier (*pa-zi-te*) here as an indication of the common use of the term *rābišū*. He assumes that in EA 40 both the *rābišu* of Alašia who sent the letter and the *rābišu* of Egypt who was the addressee were, in fact, viziers. See, however, Campbell (1964:37) and Drower (1969:11). Rainey (1978:86) s.v. *pasiti* “the vizier” from Egyptian *p3t3ty*, PN *pa-si-ti* in EA 71:1. See now Moran (1992:140 with n. 1 *pa-si-t[e]* “*vizi[er]*” (tentative). The term “vizier” derives from the Arabic *wazir*, “minister” (Wehr 1958:945) which shows that modern scholars, like the ancient Canaanites, find it problematic to render exactly the titles of Egyptian officials!

provinces. He presided over his own court in which a strict protocol was observed among a group of senior officials who gathered to hear petitions from aggrieved members of the public, from his court, the vizier sent for documents held in other departments and, when they were brought, they were opened, read and then sealed again with the vizier's seal. The documents, it seems, were frequently at the heart of disputes over land boundaries and ownership throughout the whole territory under the vizier's jurisdiction. Moreover, the vizier controlled access to the palace and supervised the security forces who protected the king. His office was the real hub of the kingdom.

The instructions for viziers of the other reigns imply that attendance for a morning briefing was an obligation, at least for most senior officials (Kemp 2012:272).

Finally, to conclude this viewpoint with regard to Amarna viziership, Kemp (2012:299) also draws our attention on the fact that Amarna (Akhenaten) as an urban city with a distributed network was a "small world" phenomenon that seems to lie behind almost all complexity. In the modern world, contact is frequent, inter alia by means of supermarkets and the World Wide Web for the distribution of goods and information. Thus, the ubiquity of the small-world phenomenon can be taken for granted as existing in New Kingdom Egypt. Amarna's ground plan (see Kemp 2012:273, XXX) suggests that it represents a small network. The map of Amarna, Kemp continues, is a diagram of connectedness, of interlocking proximity for the houses of many, often clustered around a central node, which is the house of an official living at the heart of the little urban village and locked into the broader national web that centred on the office of the vizier.

To sum up: although Kemp does not refer to EA 71:1 and does not use Egyptian terms for officials, his viewpoint of Amarna viziership holds good for Ḥaya, a wise vizier (*pazitu*) and a *rābisu* (cf. Helck in n. 15). It also applies to Joseph whose Egyptian office is regarded by many scholars as a viziership (see p. 812 below) and Shebna (p. 798 above).

***Rabû*, “officer”¹⁶**

Rabû, literally “great one,” is a vague term (see Weber *EAT*:1188–1189; Ebeling 1495–1496; *AHw*:938). This Akkadian term probably represents Egyptian *wr*, “great one”, a title of certain Egyptian officials (Albright 1942:33 n. 5). In their inscriptions the Egyptians referred to a vassal ruler as “the Great One” (*wr*) of such-and-such a city, in the sense of “prince”, “regent” or “king”, since *wr* is also applied to the heads of state of Babylonia, Assyria, Mitanni and the Hittite king (Drower 1970:51). It may be that the Amarna *rabû*, an Egyptian official, was also called a *wr* in Egyptian, but the real meaning of the term *rabû* for the indigenous scribes must be determined from the letters they wrote. The term is written with the Sumerogram ^{lu} GAL as well as phonetically.¹⁷

The position of the *rabû*, “officer”, becomes clearer from the history of the above-mentioned Ḫaya, an officer at the Egyptian court during the rule of Amenophis IV, and perhaps the one honoured at the Babylonian court (EA 11, rev:13, 14); and became a *rābiṣu* in Syria.

The *rabû* was an officer in the widest sense of the word, and represented the pharaoh. He disposed of military power. When ʿAbdi-aširta, prince of Amurru, was threatened, he asked the pharaoh to send an officer to protect him (EA 64:10–13). Submissive vassals even called him “lord” (*bēlu*) of the cities that belonged to the pharaoh. Akizzi of Qatna expected the officer to decide what the kings of Nuḫašše, Niya, Zinzar and Tuanab should grant to the pharaoh (EA 53:40–51). These kings were loyal to Amenophis IV.¹⁸

¹⁶ De Koning (1940:156) “great one”; Mercer (1939:657) EA 252:10–11 “governor”, but also “chief”. For “officer” see Albright-Mendenhall, *ANET*:485 (EA 250:24), 486 (EA 252:11), and Albright (1966:8). Campbell (1965:195 EA 250:24), 486 (EA 252:11), and Albright (1966:8). Campbell (1965:195 EA 252:11) renders “a *rabû* (an Egyptian official)” and p. 203 (EA 250:24) “commissioners”. But he also translates *rābiṣu* with “commissioner” in EA 253:34 (p. 196) and 254:15 (p. 197).

¹⁷ Ebeling *EAT*:1495–1496. See *AHw*:936ff.

¹⁸ In a “Treueverhältnis”. See Klengel (1969a:42, 108). For the chronology of the Akizzi letters (EA 52–56), see Klengel (1969a:108). Moran (1992:135) translates *rabû* in EA 64:13 with “a magnate”, sent to protect ʿAbdi-Aširta. Cf. also EA 102:22; 129:84, 85; 55:14; 108:41; 157:9.

Although it sometimes happened that the officer joined the ranks of the pharaoh's enemies, e.g., EA 102:22–23 (see Klengel 1969a:270), he was usually the loyal overseer of the Egyptian interests in Asia. Before the revolts against Egypt during which the lives of the officers were often threatened, the governors (*ḥazannūtu*) were subordinate to the officer. He could be restricted to only one city. Rib-haddi refers to the officer of a certain city with an illegible name, and the officer of the district capital Kumidi (EA 129:84, 85). According to EA 252, written in almost pure Canaanite, Lab'ayu, prince of Shechem, writes that he is only repelling aggressors who have attacked his native town (not Shechem, which was the capital) in spite of a previous treaty, sworn in the presence of an Egyptian officer (*rabû*).

EA 96 is a letter of a military commandant (^{lū} *rab šāb[ē]*, line 3; cf. Weber *EAT*:1190) who may be Amanappa,¹⁹ a well-known Egyptian official in Syria and military governor of Sumur to whom Rib-haddi of Byblos addressed six letters. In the Ugaritic texts one finds several compound terms with *rab*, e.g., *rab malaḥḥi*, “chief of boatsmen” (*PRU* IV:119, line 15). In EA 96:3 the term clearly has a military connotation.

Sometimes we find the *rabû* in the role of an inspector who had to ascertain whether Baduzan[a] was indeed malevolent towards the pharaoh, as he had been presented (EA 239:22–27). Elsewhere he is called upon to establish the reliability of vassals like Akizzi of Qatna (EA 55:14, 15) and Etakkama of Qadesh (EA 189:13–15) who eventually capitulated to Hatti.²⁰

The majority of complaints from rulers of petty-kingdoms of Southern Syria were inter alia about the ruler of Qadesh, an obvious protégé and ally of the Hittites.

¹⁹ *Rab šābē* has a military connotation. See Weber *EAT*: (1190), and Helck (1939:39). For EA 96 see Youngblood (1962:24–27). Klengel (1969a:427) indicates the letter as a “Brief eines Armeeführes an Ribaddi”. On Amanappa see Weber *EAT*:1190ff., Albright (1946:9 no. 1); Helck (1962:265 n. 24). Contrary to Albright, Helck holds that Amanappa was not a commissioner but rather a general (*rab šābē*), with which Moran (1992:170) agrees.

²⁰ Campbell (1964:123). For Etakkama see Klengel (1969a:162ff.). The name is Indo-Aryan (Klengel 1969a:170). See further Weber *EAT*:1560; *EAS*:89. Note the recent study by Gromova on the Hittite role in the political history of Syria in the Amarna age with reference to Aitagama (Etakkama) and EA 189:1–12 (Gromova 2007:295). EA 31–32, two letters in Hittite, are translated and with notes by Volkert Haas in Moran (1992:101–103).

The *rabû* of Şumur, a district capital, is the best known. He is also representative of Egypt's diminishing influence and maintained authority only over Şumer and Irqata. Rib-haddi still rendered aid to him, but the other governors (*ḥazannûtu*) and *miši*, a type of Egyptian soldier, paid him no respect (EA 108:34–41). Eventually, Aziru of Amurru killed him; his excuse was that the *rabûtu* did not allow him to enter Şumur.²¹ Finally Aziru gained control over Şumur which held an exceptional position in Amurru as the residence of the Egyptian officials and was subjected directly to the pharaoh. Here local matters were resolved by a council of elders (^{lú} *rabûtu*).²²

Thus, the title *rabû* “officer” or “magnate” was applied to various offices and ranks. In international diplomacy the *rabû* acted as plenipotentiary of his king, and in the Egyptian provinces he represented the pharaoh. The functions of the *rabû* and the *rābişu* were often similar, although not stated explicitly. The inability of the Canaanite scribes to define all the Egyptian offices more accurately, may be an important reason for this interchangeability.

Pawûra

The question is whether we here have a personal name or a title. Weber, who carefully considered all the available evidence (EAT:1224–1226) opted for a title, being the cuneiform rendering of the Egyptian title *p3-wr*, “the Great One”, following Ranke

²¹ EA 157:11ff. See Weber EAT:1261; Klengel (1969a:197), who regards *rabû* in EA:103 to be a *rābişu*. Stieglitz (1991) proposes that the city of Şumur was also known by the title “City of Amurru” (EA 162:1), because it was the principal city in the Egyptian province of Amurru. Compare URU *A-mu-ur-ra* “city of Amurru” (line 1) with *Kur a-mur-ri* “land of Amurru” in the same letter (line 77) as I also translated the latter, but I could have added “city” to “Amurru” in the former (Muntingh 1995:162–164). Despite the reading in line 1 Moran (1992:388) differs from Stieglitz.

²² EA 157:11ff. See Klengel (1969a:271), “einem Ältestenrat (“wohl = die Grossen”). For the plural see Weber EAT:1189 and 1261. Cf. EA 100, a letter of the elders of the city Irqata to “the king”. Instead of Knudtson's reading, *ši-še(!)-ti-ši* (line 4), Albright suggests *ši-bu[!]-ti*, “elders” (1946:23 no. 68). Klengel refers to “Stadältesten” (1969a:269). Reviv (1969:287–288) points out that EA 100 is a reply to the hostile approaches of the Egyptian minister Appiḥa by both “the town” (^{al} *Irqata*, line 2) and “the elders” (line 4), an indication that the two institutions co-operated just as in Mesopotamia. Irqata had no king; the last king had been killed by Aziru. See also CAD A:283.3; Artzi (1964:163); AHw:1228 s.v. *şibu(m)*, plural *şibutu(m)*, “elders in the society”. Moran (1992:173 n. 1), following Albright (see above) reads *şib(u)-ti-ši* and translates “its el<d>ers”.

(1910:17). All the available variants of the term are written with the *Personenkeil* as the indication of a personal name, but Weber pointed out (*EAT*:1226 n. 1) that the presence or absence of this determinative is not conclusive. Albright (1946:29 no. 45) accepted the equation to *p3-wr*, and from the various forms, especially *pa-ú-ru* (EA 287:45) and *pu-ú-ru* (289:38) he decided on the reading *pawūra*.²³ During the New Kingdom, he continues, (*p3*)-*wr* was a common expression for, “(foreign) chieftain”, and therefore *pawūra/re* is correctly used in connection with Aitagama (Etakkama) with his Indo-Aryan name.²⁴ Above we have already discussed *rabû* as the Akkadian rendering of the Egyptian *wr*, and the meaning of the latter.

Most of the references come from the correspondence of Rib-haddi of Byblos, but also from Abi-milku of Tyre and ‘Abdi-ḥeba of Jerusalem. When Aziru threatened Byblos (the) *pawūra* probably tried to move Rib-haddi to desertion on account of the pharaoh’s lack of interest, but he did not succeed (EA 124: rev 44f.f; cf. Weber *EAT*:1223–1224). ‘Abdi-aširtu could invade Amurru, his son Aziru joined the ‘*apiru*, and *rābišu* Ḥa’ip surrendered the district capital Šumur. Rib-haddi spoke to (the) *pawūra* who had the authority to receive Rib-haddi’s complaints against Ḥa’ip.²⁵ Therefore (the) *pawūra* was a man of great authority (Campbell 1964:102), perhaps

²³ So also *EAS*:90 *s.v.* *Pawūra*, with the variants, but EA 151:59 (*pa-wu-re*) and the restored 149:30 (*p]a-wa-ra*) for Etakkama of Qadesh (above) and the damaged 117:47 are missing. In 129:97 Rainey reads *pí-wu-ri*, thus – *wu* as Albright, contra *AHw*:852: *pawiru*. For *p3*, the Egyptian definite article, see *Wb* I:492 and *wr*, “great”, “chief” (an official) (*Wb* I:327). Cf. Alt (1959a:119). On *p3* see also n. 11 above and on *wrr* (be) great, important, much; *wr*, adj: *wr*, *wrt*, adv. “much, very”, see Gardiner (1950:561).

²⁴ Klengel (1969a:145), following Knudtzon’s text, summarises EA 151:59–60 as follows: “Aitagama (Etakkama) is lord of Qinza (*E-ta-ga-ma pa-wa-ri*)”. For the chronological meaning of EA 151 see Klengel (1964:75). It is difficult to say whether *pawūra* was used exclusively for foreign chieftains because Aitagama is the only *pawūra* whose name is known to us for certain. For variants of this personal name, see Moran (1992:380). Although *pawūra* appears together with Aziru, the Amorite, in EA 117:47, the text is so damaged that we cannot be conclusive. De Koning (1940:159) suggests here something like “the lord”. For a portion of the text of EA 117 see Greenberg (1955:39). Moran (1992:195 n. 9) comments on EA 117:47 that references to Šumur, to the official Pawuru (line 47 *[m]pa]-wu-ra;pawuru* as a common noun is found only in the letters from Tyre, EA 149:30; 151:59, and perhaps to Aziru in 117:47. For Pawura and variants as a proper name, see Moran (1992:383).

²⁵ EA 132:37–41. See Moran (1960:10 n. 1; cf. 1950:176–177). Albright (1946:18 no. 40) rendered lines 39, 40 somewhat differently.

Paḥamnata of Šumūr (Mercer 1939:441; cf. EA 68:22). According to EA 263 the house of (the) *pawūra* was completely plundered (cf. Campbell 1964:115 on the *pawūra* and the date of the letter).

According to a fragmentary letter of Rib-haddi (EA 129) the sons of ʿAbdi-aširtu threatened Byblos and (the) *piwūri* was probably killed (lines 95–97; cf. EA 131:22 and 362: rev 68, 69). *Piwūri* is the *mālik mes šarri* “royal counsellor” (131:23), and held the same office as the *rabišūtu*, mentioned in line 21, glossed by *ma-lik^{es} šarri* (note the plural). Thus it seems that *piwuri* and *rābišu* were of the same rank.

In EA 362: rev 68, 69 one has Rib-haddi’s question: “Who are they that they should commit this crime and kill the commissioner (the prefect) Piwuri” (*rābiša sū-ki-na^l pi-wu-[ri]?*) Rainey (*EAS:18, 19*) seems to regard the term here as a personal name, although it may elsewhere be a title (cf. Thureau-Dangin on the same text, 1922:94). If *piwūri* is indeed a title, we here have both a Canaanite and an Egyptian gloss.

According to a letter of ʿAbdi-ḥeba of Jerusalem Pawūre (*ʿpa-ū-ru*), the royal commissioner, has to intervene in a very grave situation.²⁶ As in EA 132:38, he has considerable authority and orders Addaya, the Egyptian resident governor of Palestine and his garrison to leave Jerusalem (287:45). In another letter ʿAbdi-ḥeba writes to the king that the commissioner, Puwūre (*ʿpu-ū-ru*), has left him and was in his headquarters in Gaza.²⁷

Thus, we conclude that *pawūra* and variants, as a personal name or a title, indicate a high Egyptian official and may be the Egyptian equivalent of the Akkadian terms *rābišu* and *rabû*. Weber *EAT:1225* argues that Paḥamnata in EA 131:34–38 is the same as Pawū[ra] in 132:36–43. Pawūra could also have been Paḥamnata’s successor. When the pharaoh’s authority had become almost non-existent on account of ʿAziru, and when Paḥamnata, the *rābišu* who had resided in Šumur returned to Egypt, a certain official was commanded to live there in the palace to represent Egypt and to

²⁶ EA 287:40–46, translated by Albright-Mendenhall in *ANET:488*. Cf. the translation of Weir (1958:39, EA 287) who regards the term as a personal name; see his commentary on p. 42.

²⁷ EA 289:37–41, translated by Albright-Mendenhall in *ANET:489* where “commissioner” is an addition, as *rābišu/rabû* does not appear in the text.

perform the tasks of a *rābiṣu* (cf. EA 132; 46; 362:69).²⁸ As to the interchange between personal name and title, references to the Egyptian title “pharaoh” are illuminating. While in certain parts of the Old Testament, e.g., in the patriarchal narrative, “pharaoh” seems to be a personal name, in 2 Kings 23:29 it is clearly a title: “Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt”.

To summarise, the term *rābiṣu*, “commissioner” was widely used in the ancient Near East, and was a common title in the Amarna letters. He was appointed by the pharaoh, and, as his representative in Palestine and Syria, he normally had great authority and military power. As the Canaanite scribes could not define in Akkadian, which was not their vernacular, all the Egyptian offices they met, they rather overburdened terms such as *rābiṣu* and *rabû*. Sometimes they resorted to Egyptian words or terms as discussed above that can be related to the *rābiṣu*. It is the person and not his title(s) that reveals to us the activities of the Egyptian officials (Hachman 1982:23–30, especially p. 25).

²⁸ See Campbell (1964:102) who confines Pawūra’s career, as far as Byblos is concerned, to a period of two or three years ending before the end of Rib-haddi’s career. For the geographical and administrative areas in which the Egyptian vassals feature, see p. 791 above. Pawūra was killed (EA 129:96; 131:22; 362:69). See Thureau-Dangin (1922:94 n. 3). Rib-haddi probably lost his life; see Helck (1962:182, 311); Campbell (1964:107); Klengel (1969a:202–203). EA 139 and 140 are letters from Ilirapiḥ and a council of elders to Amenophis IV, representing Byblos, after Rib-haddi’s forced abandonment of the city. See Klengel (1969a:202); Reviv (1969:289). Ilirapiḥ (West Semitic “My Rapi” [the healer], probably mayor of Byblos after Rib-haddi; Moran 1992:382). Cf. Ilirapiḥ with “Ammurapi/Hammurapi (‘m [theophoric element] + *rpi* king of Ugarit; Gordon 1965 no. 1864; Tropper 2008:107) and the reference to Yahweh in Exod 15:26, “I am your healer” (*rōfe’eka*) – all with the root *rp* ‘to heal”.

***Hazannu*, “governor”²⁹**

In the Egyptian double administration the local prince (*ḥazannu*) who was under the supervision of the *rābiṣu*, the pharaoh’s representative, played a second but important part. He was an Egyptian vassal and in the Amarna letters humbly referred to himself as “the man (*awīlu*) of X” (Albright understood *awīlu* somewhat differently; see below). Some vassals (see EA 260, 317, 318) address the pharaoh as *šarru rabû* (LUGAL GAL), in the Amarna age the normal political title of the kings of equal empires (Artzi 1968:165). Their excessive grovelling before the pharaoh, their lord (*bēlu*), includes the “seven times on the belly and seven times on the back”. One also comes across phrases such as “thy slave (*ardu*) the dust on thy feet” (EA 141:4, etc.; cf. Drower 1970:51ff.). While the *bēlu-ardu*-relation in, e.g., the Code of Hammurapi implies absolute right of possession, in the Amarna letters it is rather a token of respect from the inferior towards his superior: the princes towards the ruling pharaoh (EA 60:3; 74:1, 4; 286:1; 147:2; cf. Ps 123:2 with 195:16–23) or high Egyptian officials (71:1–6; 73:1; 82:1,4; 93:3; etc.). They even call themselves “dog” (UR.KU:*kalbu*; see EAT:1432; Rainey 1978:75 EAS:66; Thomas 1960:410–427; AHw:424; CAD K:72). As a further example of *kalbu* as a term of abuse Na’aman (1979:679 n. 31) adds the restored EA 281:25.

Officially the title of the native chieftains was *awīlu* or *amēlu* (Albright 1966:8; cf. EAS:57), “free man”, “chief” (of such-and-such a place). Their office was that of *ḥazannu* (or variants), “governor”, while in Canaanite circles they were called king (Akkadian *šarru*, Canaanite *milku*). In one letter the prince of Hazor even applies the term “king” to himself at the beginning of his salutation, (EA 227:3; Albright 1943a:11 n. 21; 1966:8) which is probably a slip of the local scribe, resulting from the

²⁹ On the form, always written phonetically, and meaning, see Ebeling EAT:1415–1416 s.v. *ḥazan(nu)* resp. *ḥazianu*, “regent”, Youngblood (1961:116–117); Albright (1966:8), *ḥāziānu* (*ḥazānu*), “governor” (literally “inspector”); AHw:338–339, *ḥazannu(m)* II, “Bürgermeister”; EAS:64, *ḥazannu* (*ḥazānu*, *ḥaziannu*, *ḥaziānu*), “chief magistrate of a town, mayor of a city”; note the gloss ^{lu} ‘MÄSKIM’ *ḥa-zi-ni-ka* in EA 317:21. CAD H:164 s.v. *ḥazannu*: “In EA the *ḥ*. is a local ruler of a city under the control of an Egyptian *rabiṣu*-official”. For the plural on *-ūtu* see Böhl (1909:34). For the singular *-ān*, *-ānum* see von Soden (1952, para. 56r). On *ḥazannu* as the designation of an Egyptian official in EA 317:21, Moran (1992:349 n. 2) compares EA 230 n.3.

fact that “king” was the common inner Canaanite title for all city-state rulers (Na’aman 1988:183 n. 18 with many references).

“Kings” here reminds one of the local princes designated in the book of Joshua as kings. Campbell (1960:22) refers to Joshua 11:1–10 and the Abimelech episode of Judges 9 that confirm this viewpoint (cf. Reviv 1966:252–257).

On the government of the city-state, Buccellati (1967:65–66) concludes from a study of the Amarna letters that it seems at first that the position of the various city rulers was not the same in all cases. One finds differences in the titulary of the individual rulers. As above, he states that the most important titles are three: “king” (LUGAL *šarru*), “man (of)” (*lú amīlu*), and “governor” (*ḥazannu*). Do these titles reflect different types of government? A close study of the evidence reveals that the different titles do not imply different functions; in several instances the same person bears two or three of the apparent different titles as shown in his table. Rib-haddi of Byblos is never called king, while Zimreda of Sidon offers an example of “three in one”: LUGAL/*šarru* (EA 148:25, 40), *amī/ēlu* (146:14–15 etc.) and *ḥazannu* (144:5).

Furthermore, such an understanding of the real functioning of Egyptian titles in the Amarna age helps us to obtain a better conception of Joseph’s Egyptian office. From the biblical text (Gen 41:41–44) we can define at least six official titles carried by Joseph. The first three are his “working” titles, which indicate actual responsibilities. The last three are honorific epithets carrying no specific duties but which indicate Joseph’s personal relationship to the king (Ward 1960:145). While many scholars hold that the pharaoh appointed Joseph to the office of vizier (see, inter alia, van Selms 1967:213–214; Kitchen 1982:619 and those mentioned by Ward 1960:144), Ward, however, denies that Joseph was appointed to the vizierate, but states that we may approximate Joseph’s full titulary in a normal Egyptian arrangement. “That he cannot be called Vizier in no way minimises the power he held, for his titles and epithets make him one of the most important officials in the Egyptian government” (Ward 1960:150).

The viewpoint that these princes were the descendants of aristocratic professional warriors who once had enabled the Hyksos kings to settle in the country, and who

were later appointed by the pharaohs as rulers, is not completely correct. Van Seters (1966:185–190) argues that the so-called Hyksos, the strong Amorite princes of Syria-Palestine, who were Semites and not Hurrians, became heir to the Egyptian throne in the time of the latter's dynastic weakness. The Amorite population of Syria-Palestine in the Middle-Bronze Age was probably designated as *ʿ3mw*, the same term to be found in Egyptian literature for the foreign population of Egypt in the Hyksos period.

While a Hurrian-Indo-Aryan penetration into Palestine in the second millennium B.C. cannot be denied, it is hardly possible to postulate an Indo-Aryan or *maryannu* element among the Hyksos. The Hurrian movement penetrated Syria-Palestine only in conjunction with the *maryannu*, an aristocracy of charioteers, after the establishment of the Mitanni power (after circa 1600 B.C.). The early pharaohs, who seriously crippled resistance by the Amorite kingdoms, enable the Hurrians and Indo-Aryans to move into the region so that one of the Egyptian names for Syria-Palestine is “land of Ḫurru”, a name that cannot be dated much before the Amarna age.

Thus, whereas the Hurrian movement and the Hyksos rise to power should not be regarded as coincidental, we should review the position of the local princes, the majority with clear Northwest Semitic names, a number with certain or probable Indo-Aryan names, and few with Hurrian names (Albright 1966:13; cf. Drower 1970:7–8). In North Syria Hurrian names abound already in the sixteenth century and the leading citizens at Alalakh were now *maryannu* while the picture of Palestine according to the Amarna letters is different. The proportion of Indo-Aryans decreases as we go downwards in the social scale; most of the Amarna names are those of native princes. While it is not correct to say that the *maryannu* enabled the Hyksos kings to settle in the country, it would be better to say that the native princes were the heirs of the Amorite kingdoms, and Amurru, the northern district under the leadership of ʿAbdi-aširtu and his sons rejected Egyptian domination. Where possible, the *maryannu* would strengthen the hands of Indo-Aryan princes.

In Amurru ʿAbdi-aširtu established an Amorite dynasty and he was succeeded by his son Aziru. After the death of Lab'ayu, prince of Shechem who to a certain extent filled ʿAbdi-aširtu's role in Palestine, his place was taken by his sons. Several such

local dynastic sequences are known to us (Albright 1966:5–6). Contrary to the normal tone of abject humility in the Amarna letters, Lab’ayu intended to maintain his right. This right is connected with his ancestral town, when despoilers took the image of his ancestral patron deity. In his native tongue Lab’ayu uses a proverb about the ant, with its scriptural parallels in Proverbs 6:6 and 30:25.³⁰ His “sin” is that although he readily accepts his vassal-status, he complains that the Egyptian yoke weighs much less heavily on Milkilu than on him (EA 254:16–17; see Moran 1975:147–151). Abi-milku of Tyre probably also belongs to an old dynastic generation.³¹ As *bitu* often has the meaning of “dynasty” the phrase *gabbi bīt abiya* in a letter of Aitagama (EA 189:10) which Knudtzon translated “mein ganzes väterliches Haus(=Gebiet)” is illuminating. Moran (1992:269) renders the phrase “my entire paternal estate”.³² The descension of the local princes from the aristocratic professional warriors, the *maryannu*, is confirmed by a letter, found at Taanach, which was written by the Egyptian Amanḥatpa to Rewassa, prince of Taanach. In the letter, no. 5:4, 5, Amanḥatpa requested: “Send me thy brethren together with their chariots”. The Canaanite chieftains were members of the *maryannu* class, only *primus inter pares*.³³ Thus, a

³⁰ EA 252:16–19. See Albright (1943b:29–32; 1955:7); Albright-Mendenhall *ANET*:486 n. 9; Campbell (1960:19; 1965:195–196); Halperen-Huehnergard (1982:228–229).

³¹ See Klengel (1969a:259 n. 8). For the identity of Abi-milku see Albright (1937:190ff.); Albright-Mendenhall *ANET*:484 n. 2. Whether the status of Abi-milku was represented by that of the native chieftains is hard to determine, though such a possibility must be kept in mind. It was noted by Alt that Abi-milku, who probably belonged to an old dynastic generation of Tyre, never indicated himself as “man (*awīlu*) of Tyre”, i.e., a ruler of a city state under Egyptian sovereignty. On the contrary, he utilised in EA 149:14 the title “commissioner of the king” (*rābiṣ ṣarri*) who resided in Tyre, a “Beamten in ägyptischen Diensten, der keinen einheimischen Dynasten neben sich hat, sondern die Stadt kraft der ihm vom Pharaoh verliehenen Amtsvollmacht allein verwaltet” (Alt 1959a:117–118). On hereditary power according to the Amarna letters see also Gray (1952:198).

³² See *CAD* B:294 *s.v.* *bītu* for the meaning “dynasty”, where EA 89:48f. and 256:20 are cited (cf. Albright 1943a:12 n. 32); also Klengel (1969a:146). *AHW*:133, however, renders *bīt abi(m)* “Vaterhaus, Familie”, equivalent to Hebrew *bēt ‘ab* (*KBL*:2,123), while in the phrase *bēt David* (1 Sam 20:16) *bayit* = dynasty (*KBL*:123).

³³ Albright (1944a:23, n. 77). Albright-Mendenhall date the Taanach letters in the fifteenth century B.C., roughly three generations before the bulk of the Amarna tablets (*ANET*:490 n. 28). Glock (1971) comments on 11 personal names on a new Taanach tablet (T.T. 950) found in 1968 which reflects the same ethnic diversity as those formerly discovered by Sellin, namely Northwest Semitic, Indo-Aryan and Hurrian-Anatolian. Cf. Albright

strong tie existed between *ḥazannu* and *maryannu*, a fact which explains the peculiar hereditary³⁴ status of the former. On the other hand, ʿAbdi-heba, prince of Jerusalem, stated emphatically that his office was not hereditary and not that of a *ḥazannu*,³⁵ but an office to which he was appointed by the king.

The *ḥazannu* may be regarded as a link between the Egyptian government as represented by the *rābiṣu* and the civilians (Helkck 1962:261; Malamat 1966:194). The term *rābiṣu* is even glossed by *ḥa-za-ni-ki* (EA 317:21) as has been shown above. Under the rule of a peaceful king, e.g., Amenophis III, the princes were fairly loyal to Egypt, but with the decline of Egyptian authority in the north, they aspired to independence, even with the help of the GAZ^capiru. Rib-haddi warns Amanappa that all the lands will go over to the GAZ if he does not intercede (EA 73:14, 33; cf. Greenberg 1955:33–34). The combined action of ʿAbdi-aširtu of Amurru and the GAZ was indeed a serious menace to the governors, a fact of which EA 74:32–36 (Greenberg 1955:34; Moran 1953:78; Mendenhall 1947:123–24) and 82:5–13 (Albright-Moran 1948:241; Greenberg 1955:36) give witness. Liverani (1965:267ff.) emphasises the social implications in the politics of ʿAbdi-aširtu. He shapes the war as a revolt of the common people, the peasants (*ḥupšu*) against the “lords” and in order to return the refugees (*ʿapiru*), who make up the majority of the troops, to their lands. The *ʿapiru* (*ḥabiru/ḥapiru* or [SA.] GAZ) frequently mentioned in the vassal correspondence, were apparently landless elements and fugitives who, as brigands, attacked the settled areas or hired themselves out as mercenaries (see Knudtzon 1915:46–52; EAT:1146–1148; AHw:322 *s.v.* *ḥapiru(m)*; Cohen and Westbrook 2000:9; van der Westhuizen 1995:211–227 SA. GAZ *ʿapiru*)

(1966:13) and Glock (1983:61, PN of addressee, Talwasur an Indo-Iranian name). For a recent discussion of the *maryannu* see Reviv (1965:10–52; 1972:218–28). The 34 *maryannu* of Alalakh (AT 128) were apparently the leading group of citizens in all ranks and professions, including the office of *ḥazannu*.

³⁴ See EA 286:9–13; cf. 287:25–28 and 288:13–15, translated by Albright-Mendenhall ANET:487, 488.

³⁵ EA 288:9. Abdi-heba uses three concepts to describe what he really was, viz “petty officer of the king”, “shepherd of the king” and “a bearer of the royal tribute” (lines 10–12), which will be discussed below.

From one of Rib-haddi's letters we infer that under normal conditions the governor was inferior to the commissioner: "Who are the sons of 'Abdi-aširtu, the slave and dog? ... Previously they used to take the cities of your governors, and you were negligent. Behold! Now they have driven out your commissioner (*rābišaka*) and have taken his cities for themselves."³⁶

The pharaoh appointed (*skn, Gt*) Rib-haddi as governor (EA 125:31–32; *CAD H*:164; Liverani 1971:264 renders "compared" instead of "appointed"), but with observance of the local dynasty, and the loyalty of the candidate. Although Rib-haddi kept loyal to Egypt, he had serious quarrels with other governors whom he nevertheless called "my comrades" or "my brothers". Besides "brother" (*aḥu*, EA 137:13), a term in the international correspondence (EA 1–44) for "equals" (Drower 1969:4; cf. Reviv 1966:254 n. 8), the chieftains also used the terms *tappu*, "companion" (113:30; cf. *EAT*:1211) and *ibru*, "colleague" (126:16; cf. *EAT*:1228).³⁷ They were of equal rank. The feminine form *tappatu*, appears in EA 292, a letter of Ba^clu-šipti of Gezer to the pharaoh. "A brick may move from beneath its companions, but I will not move from beneath the two feet of the king, my lord" (lines 13–17).³⁸

Intermarriage among the families of rulers for diplomatic reasons is a practice with a long history. It may be that Rib-haddi went to the comparative safety of Biruta

³⁶ EA 104:17ff. Text and translation according to Moran (1961:63) and more recently (1992:177) with "mayors" instead of "governors".

³⁷ *CAD I-J*:5, 6 defines *ibru* as a person of the same status and profession and cites EA 126:16). See also *AHW*:363. Van Selms (1950:70 and 1957:119) argues that in the Code of Lipit-Ištar *ibru* has the special meaning of "best man".

³⁸ Translation of Albright-Mendenhall *ANET*:489. For lines 13ff., cf. EA 296:16–22; 266:19–25). See Weber *EAT*:1346 (EA 296:16–22 and 19). The poetical wording of 266:19–25 may be compared with Isa 54:10ff. (Weber *EAT*:1324). Weber comments on EA 266:19–25 that, like 264:15ff., poetical wording expresses the feeling of absolute dependency from the pharaoh, and a sense of unity with him. As 264:15ff. reminds us of Psalm 139:7ff., so does 266:19–25 with Isaiah 54:10ff. which Weber cites in German. I quote from RSV: "For the mountains may depart and the hills be moved, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you and my covenant of peace shall not be removed." If the prophet Isaiah, referring to the mountains and hills, could say that stronger than natural connections the love of God for his people would be, so – using the same metaphor – Tagi, sender of EA 264–266 to the pharaoh, could be assured of the steadfast fidelity of the pharaoh, Weber concludes. Moran's interpretation of EA 264 is more or less in the same direction, expressed in the title: "And there was light".

(Beirut) (EA 136–138) because he was related to prince Ammunira by marriage though it is not stated explicitly (see Moran 1992:217 n. 5 on the gloss DUG.GA:TU.KA in EA 136:28). A peculiar situation developed in Tyre according to another letter of Rib-haddi who tried to arrange a marriage between his sister and the prince of Tyre to bind the princely house of Tyre to his interests, but did not succeed (EA 89:18). Instead of *i-zir-t[a]* “Ich habe (Tyrus) Hilfe verschafft” Winckler-Abel and Winckler read *i-mu-t[a]* (EAT:423 note h) and accepted by Youngblood (1961:322), “I had established marriage relati[ons] wit[h] Tyre”; Moran (1992:162) “I made connubium with Tyre”. See EAT:1476 and AHw:690 for *mutu* “Gatte”.

To sum up, the governor, often with a hereditary office and regarded as “king”, had to fulfil important functions in Late Bronze Age Syria and Palestine, occupied by Egypt. He owed his particular status to the Amorite kingdoms that were followed by a Hurrian-Indo-Aryan penetration including *maryannu* out of whom some of the native princes came forth. The governors regarded themselves as of equal rank. They had to collect tribute and supply *corvée*. Some of them remained loyal to Egypt, though others, like ʿAbdi-aširtu of Amurru and his sons, ceded from Egypt.

Other terms in connection with the government of the city-state

ʿAbdi-heba, prince of Jerusalem said that he was neither a governor (*haziānu*) nor a petty officer (^{lú} *ú-e-ú*) of the king, but a shepherd of the king (^{lú} *ruḫi šarri* ^{ri}) and a bearer of the royal tribute (*ūbil bilat šarri*).³⁹

³⁹ EA 288:9–12, translated by Albright-Mendenhall ANET:488. Cf. the fragmentary 285:5, 6. CAD H:164 translates the former slightly differently: “I am not a *haziānu*, I am an *ueu*-official (*LÚ ú-e-ú*) to the king, my lord”.

***Wē'u* (Egyptian *w^cw*), “petty officer”⁴⁰**

He was often in charge of a detachment of archers, called *piṭatu*, Egyptian *pḏtyw* (Albright 1966:7). See below. The following variants are to be found in Knudtzon’s texts:

- a) ^{lú} *meš* *wi-i-ma* EA 108:16; 109:22 with *wi-e-[ma]*; 150:6 and restored in 152:47, 50 (see Na’aman 1979:675 with n. 12);
- b) ^{lú} *meš* *wi-ḥi*, 129:12; cf. *w[i]-ḥu-ka*, 230:11; and
- c) ^{lú} *wi-ú* 150:9; 109:39 has ^{lú} *wi-a*; ^{lú} *ú-i-ú* 285:6; 288:10; ^{lú} *ú-e-eḥ* 287:69, *ú-e-e* line 47, translated by Albright with “officer”.

Here we have an important military person. The (Egyptian) petty officer is named in connection with chariots and the *širma*-men (EA 108:13–17 and see Schroeder 1(918:col.125; cf. EA 109:22 and 129:12) as protector of Tyre (150:6). Yama promised to protect the pharaoh’s officer (230:11). An officer was probably given as hostage for food (109:39). ^cAbdi-ḥeba was not a *ḥazianu*, but a petty officer (see Alt, Rapp, and Weir). Albright-Mendenhall also distinguish between governor and petty officer. It should be pointed out that the reading LÚ MEŠ KEŠDA: *ši-ir-ma* in EA 107:42 and 108:15 as indication of a type of military personal (Rainey 1978:94) is now rejected by Moran (1992:182 n. 2; cf. 1992:181 n. 3).

^{lú} *ruḥi šarri* (EA 288:11; Moran 1992:331 n. 2)

The term *ruḥi* has been interpreted as either Egyptian or Semitic. Böhl regarded it as a participle active and related it to Hebrew *rō^ceh* “a friend” as in Proverbs 13:20; 27:10; 28:7 and 29:3, but added in a footnote that Steindorf had connected the term with the Egyptian *rḥ* (Böhl 1909:25). Ranke also offered an Egyptian explanation with *rḥ* = “acquaintance” as in the well-known Egyptian title, *rḥ štnj(?)*, “acquaintance of the

⁴⁰ See Knudtzon (1899:280–288); Ranke (1910:19); Ebeling (1910:78) and *EAT*:1541; Schroeder (1918:col.125); Alt (1953:100 n. 7); Albright (1934:17–18; 1946:21 no. 53). Albright-Mendenhall *ANET*:488 translate the term “petty officer” in EA 287:69 and 288:10. See further Albright (1966:7); Feigin (1944:442 n. 2); Rapp (in Galling 1950:26; EA 288:9, 10; cf. p. 25); Lambdin (1953:77 n. 21); Faulkner (1953:45), “ordinary soldier”; Weir (1958:39, 41) “warden”, subordinated to the *rābiṣu*; Mettinger (1971:68). Moran (1992:329 n. 10) states that Egyptian *w^cw* referred to an infantryman (lowest grade) or simply a soldier as already in Gardiner (1955:560).

king” (1910:25) or *rḥ-nsw.t* with the same meaning (*Wb* II:446). Knudtzon gives the meaning “shepherd?” but Ebeling relates the term to Egyptian *rḥ* (*EAT*:1499). Mercer (1939:714–715) also considers the meaning “shepherd”, compares the Hebrew *rō^ceh* and the Akkadian *rē’û*, both “shepherd” (cf. *AHw*:977). The pharaoh himself was presented as a shepherd.⁴¹ The vocalisation of *ruḥi* makes identification with the Hebrew *rēa^c* rather unlikely (van Selms 1957:122 n. 39), although in Proverbs one also finds the vocalisation *rō^ceh* (see Böhl above). De Vaux discusses, inter alia, “the friend (acquaintance)” of king David (2 Sam 15:37).⁴² Akkadian *ḥ* may represent West Semitic *ḥ*. On the other hand, Rainey points out that all Knudtzon’s spellings with *ḥ* are simply graphic representations of *’* (1974:307) and that *ruḥi* = *rū’u*, “companion, friend”, (p. 308; cf. *AHw*:998 that cites EA 288:11, *lū ru-’i šarri*). For the Hebrew *rē^ceh* I, “friend”, with cognates *ruḥi šarri* (EA 288:11), Egyptian *rḥ* and Akkadian *rū’u* see *HAL*:1179, and for the Egyptian verb *rḥ*, “learn, become acquainted with, know”, and derivatives see Gardiner (1950:579). Thus “be acquainted with the king” or “the king’s friend” is probably the best explanation of an enigmatic title. See also Brongers (1967:59) on 1 Kings 4:5; cf. *rē^ceh ham-mèlèk*, “the king’s friend” compared with Egyptian and EA 288:11.

***Ūbil bilat šarri*, “a bearer of the royal tribute” (EA 288:12)**

The term *ūbil* here, with the plural *lū meš ū-bi-li-mi* in EA 287:55 is a Canaanite participle like *sūkini*.⁴³ Although *Abdi-heba* was not a *ḥazannu*, he was responsible for the tribute in Jerusalem of which he was a punctual payer (Weber *EAT*:1340).

⁴¹ Müller (1961:126–144). For Mari see Parrot (1939:171–182). Müller concludes with Jesus’s words in German, “Ich bin der gute Hirte!”

⁴² The term *rē^ceh hammèlèk* (1 Kings 4:5) may be equivalent to the Canaanite *ruḥi šarri* and the Egyptian *rḥ nsw.t*. If so, it follows that *rē^ceh* is a foreign word, to be distinguished from *rēa^c*, “friend” (de Vaux 1939:405; 1961:123). For “friend of the king” in the Old Testament and parallels elsewhere, see further Donner (1961:269–277 especially 273); Noth (1968:64–65), Mettinger (1971:63–69 especially pp. 67–68) (*ruḥi šarri*); Hermann (1975:180, 185 n. 42). See also Moran (1992:331 n. 2) *lū ru-ḥi*, “friend” (?).

⁴³ Böhl (1909:25); Ebeling (1910:59, para. 9); *EAT*:1358, contrary to the Akkadian (*w*)*ābilu(m)*; see *AHw*: 1450. In the sense of “to bring tribute, tax” (*biltu*) see *AHw*:126 s.v. *biltu(m)*; 1450 s.v. *w/babālum*; *CAD A* I:12 s.v. *abālu* (EA 160:44) and *CAD B*:233 (EA 254:13; 160:44).

Moran (1992:331) translates the phrase “a tribute-bearer of the King” with *ūbil*, “bearer”, like *ūbili* in EA 287:55, or “I have brought” (n. 2).

*lú kūsi*⁴⁴ and *lú qartappi*

In self-abasement before the pharaoh Yapa^ci calls himself *lú kūsi sisēka* (EA 299:6), translated with “thy stableroom” (Thomas 1960:415). Other native rulers did likewise (EA 304:7; 305:7, etc.). *Kūsi* seems to be an Egyptian word. The light Egyptian chariot, drawn by two horses, had a driver (*ktn* or *kdn*) and a fighter (*snn*) (Faulkner 1953:43). According to *Wb* V:148, the former (cf. cuneiform *kūsi*) was especially the chariot driver of the king, and it was a military office. The vassal kings perhaps rendered such personal service to the pharaoh when they were trained in their youth at the Egyptian court (Ranke 1910:23 n. 2).

In EA 298:7 and 300:7 *lú kūsi* is replaced by *lú qartappi* with approximately the same meaning.⁴⁵

[Rē]šu (EA 125:35)

Rib-haddi writes to the pharaoh that the cities of the *ḥazannūtu* now belong to the sons of ‘Abdi-aširtu with whom he did not want to come to an agreement. Their heads (*lú meš ri-šu-nu*; the reading of the first syllable is not sure), that are the heads of the cities, have been subjected to the sons of ‘Abdi-aširtu. For persons *rēšu* means “slave, servant” (*AHw*:975). Here it is used as a synonym for *ḥazannūtu*. Knudtzon (*EAT*:538a) remarks that the first syllable may also be read as *ḥu* in which case an *ub* might have been left out, thus *lú meš ḥu-^šub>-šu-nu*, supported by Rainey (1974:307;

⁴⁴ So *EAS*:68. Instead of Knudtzon’s reading *guzi* “Pferdeknecht”, derived from an Egyptian word (Ebeling *EAT*:1411; cf. Weber *EAT*:1347 for EA 298:7). For an Egyptian origin of the term see Burchardt (1910/II:53 No. 1039 *kt̪*/d. No. 1044 *ktn*; No:1048 *kdn* “Wagenlenker”. Cf. Ranke 1910:23), but see *CAD* G:147 sv *guzi*. Egyptian spelling *ku-si* and *ku-si-na* support Albright’s equation with **kōsi* (for references see *EAS*:68). Cf. Izre’el (1978:23) with *ku_g-si*=**kōsi* or **kōse*, “groom, stableman”. Add here also Rainey (1978:77) and more recently Hoch (1994:262, 344).

⁴⁵ *EAT*:1447: “in Verb mit *amēl* Stallknecht”. *CAD* K:226 s.v. *kartappu*; *AHw*:451 s.v. *k/qartappu(m)* “Pferde-, Zugtierführer”. For a Hittite *qartappu* see below. Rainey (1978:76) reads and translates the term as *kartappu*, “groom”. La Roche (1956:29–30) discusses the Hittite pictogram (hieroglyphs) of *qartappu*, “coachman, driver”.

1978:73). The *ḥupšu*, “peasants”, were free-born citizens, but might be called upon to serve in the *corvée* and the army. Thus they were, as in Assyria, half-free; in Hebrew, however, *ḥofši* means “free” (Albright 1966:14; Drower 1969:15). Moran (1992:205 with n. 4) argues for a reading *ḥ u-<ub>- šu-šu-nu*, “peasants”; *rēšu* as the designation of a person does not appear in EA. On Hebrew *ḥofši* with reference to *ḥupšu* see *HAL*:328.

[E]ḫlu (EA 74:26)

Rib-haddi writes that ‘Abdi-aširtu has said to the people of Ammiya, “Kill your [I]ord ([*e]ḫ-la-ku-nu*) so that you may be like us and be at peace” (lines 24–27; see Moran 1961:64–65 for the construction). Youngblood (1961:139) comments that one may get the impression that *eḫlu*, rather than *bēlu*, is the Byblian equivalent of Sumerian EN, which is not the case. For stylistic or other reasons, the scribe decided to use *eḫlu*, “mature/grown man” as synonym for *bēlu*, a term that also can be used with a connotation of disrespect, as in some Mari texts (*ARM* I 73:43–44). The similar-sounding *etellu*, “potentate, lord” (cf. *AHw*:260) could have been in the scribe’s mind. On the other hand, *eḫlu* is also a rough synonym for *awīlu*, “free man”, the official title of the native chieftains. A relation has been pointed out between Sumerian *gurus* = Akkadian *eḫlu* “(grown young) man”, and Ugaritic **baḥhūru* = Hebrew *bāḥûr*, normally “youth” (Rainey 1973:140–141). See Rainey (1978:71) *eḫlu* “young man, man”. Moran (1992:143) translates *eḫlu* in EA 74:26 tentatively with “leader” and comments in a long footnote (p. 144 n. 7) that the use of *eḫlu* “(young adult) male” if it is the correct reading [E]N- *la-ku-nu*?) is without parallel in related or similar passages and offers an explanation.

lú meš ***bēli ālim***, singular *lú* ***bēl āli***

Rib-haddi writes in EA 102 to Yanḫamu that the city of Ambi (^{al} *Ambi*) is hostile towards him and that the *rabû* and the *lú meš* *bēli ālim* have made a treaty with the sons

of ʿAbdi-aširtu: “the commissioner and the nobles of the city are at peace with the sons of ʿAbdi-aširtu”.⁴⁶

This term is to be discussed in connection with the role of “the city” (*ālu*) and “the elders” (*šibūtu*), to which already has been referred (n. 20 above). Evidence of representative institutions and self-government among the cities of Syria and Palestine is preserved in several tablets. These bodies are designated by the name of the city which they represent: “the town of N”. When the entire free citizenry of the city is included, they are designated as “the men (*aw/mīlū*) of N” or “the sons (*mārū*) of N”. According to the Amarna letters, the citizen body was active as an institution among the cities temporarily lacking a local ruler or in cities in which no kingship had been instituted (Reviv 1969:284ff.). The ^{lú meš} *bēli ālim* were the city rulers of the vassal cities in Amurru (Weber *EAT*:1200) who, together with the *rabū*, joined the ranks of ʿAbdi-aširtu’s sons, as some *ḥazannūtu* also did (EA 125:33–38). In fact, ^{lú meš} *bēli ālim* may be identical with *ḥazannūtu* as in EA 138 where, in line 49, *lu meš beli alim* indicates the rulers of the cities, already occupied by ʿAziru (Weber *EAT*:1240). But in the same letter Rib-haddi gives quotations from letters given by “the men of” Byblos (*awīlū*^{al} *Gubla*, lines 11ff., 122ff.), discussing future policy of the city. In matters of decisive importance, the city-body was constituted in its entire form (Reviv 1969:290). Therefore Moran’s translation “the nobles of the city” is attractive: ^{lú meš} *bēli ālim* seems to express self-government, ancient democracy by the *ḥazannu* and *awīlū*! (Cf. Artzi 1964:159ff.).

Finally, concerning the problematic ENri (EA 286:7, 15, 32), transcribed by Knudtzon as *bēli^{ri}*, but see his footnote *EAT*:860a: Loretz (1974:485) reads EN ri as

⁴⁶ EA 102:22–23. Text and translation of Moran (1950:28), as an illustration of the use of the Canaanite perfect stative *šalmū* with present meaning. This also illustrates the use of the root *šlm* for the conclusion of a treaty. *Salīmum*, “friendship, alliance” has approximately the same meaning as the Old Testament *šālôm* (Muntingh 1978:230). *AHW* 119 renders *bēli āli* “Stadtherr,” and *CAD* AI:388 s.v. *ālu*, “city lords”, citing EA 102:222. For *bēlū*, *eḫlū* and *ḥazannūtu* as synonyms see Liverani (1965:273). Moran’s later translation is similar to the one above: “know t<hat> the magnate (^{lu} *rabū*) and the lords of the city are at peace with the sons of ʿAbdi-Aširta” with “lords” the property owners (also EA 138:49) cf. the similar use of *baʿal* in Hebrew and Ugaritic (*bʿl ḫlb*, “the lord of Ḫalba”) (Moran 1992:175–176 with n. 5). For *bʿl* “Grundbesitzer, Bürger” of a city in Hebrew see *HAL*:137.

iwri, the Hurrian word for “lord”, one of various explanations mentioned by Moran (1992:327 n. 1).

***Qēpu* (EA 190:9)**

The pharaoh writes in EA 190 to Aitagama of Kadesh (?; Klengel 1969a:146). Lines 7–9, where the term appears, are unfortunately part of a broken text so that a definite interpretation is excluded. Knudtzon translates the broken line ... ^{lí} ME ù *qé-pa* ù- “...-man and the governor and ...” According to Weber the meaning of *lí* ME is obscure, while *qé-pa* and Puhuru (EA 57:6=Pahura, 122:31) may be identical (EA 1287). Puhuru was an Egyptian commissioner in Syria. Puhuru and variants (“the Syrian”), a common personal name of the New Kingdom should not be regarded as a title as Weber suggested (Albright 1946:18 no. 41). Rainey (EAS:69) translates *qēpu* here by “governor official”.⁴⁷ To conclude, an identification of the *qēpu* in EA 190 with the *rābiṣu* seems to be quite tenable, especially when one compares the meaning of ^{lí} *qēpu* in Middle Assyrian texts from Tell Billa, the ancient Šibaniba that dates from the first half of the thirteenth century BC (Finkelstein 1953:114ff.) where he was “representative (of the king)”. In Late Assyrian letters he was the royal attaché at important Babylonian shrines (Finkelstein 1953:124–125).

Šakkanakku or girseqû (?)

In three letters from Abi-milku of Tyre (EA 148:14, 26, 38, 44; 149:18, 21, 83; 151:69) the term *amēl šepi*, according to Knudtzon’s reading (LÚ.NER; see EAT:1520) appears which he was unable to translate. Abi-milku asks the pharaoh for ten of these persons to protect his city; daily the king of Sidon takes one of these men of Abi-milku (148:26). The king of Sidon has not returned the oath of peace, and there is no one else (line 38). Finally, these men are involved in the hostility (line 44). Albright reads the term LÚ.GÌR which is regularly used in the sense of “man, person”,

⁴⁷ Cf. *AHw*:923, s.v. *qīpu(m)*, “beauftragt, Vertrauensmann”; *CAD* Q:264ff, “official; administrator of a region, a city, a temple”. Moran (1992:271 n. comments on this broken line: “No connected sense: *qi-pa*, “trust” (line 9) which points to the meaning according to *AHw* above; “someone to confide in, confidante”.

in the Abi-milku letters, but occurs nowhere else (1937:202). Greenberg (1955:41) reads in line 44 LÚ.GÌR = *šakkanakku*, “controller”. That GÌR = *šēpu*, “foot”, is clear (*EAS*:82; Rainey 1978:94) though his examples do not include LÚ.GÌR. For *gìr*, = *šēpu*, “Fuss” and *šakkanakku*, “Statthalter” and *girsīqqû*, “ein Bediensteter” see Borger (1988:17: n. 444). The term *šakkanakku* has a long history,⁴⁸ but in the Amarna letters the reading *šakkanakku* seems to be questionable, and Albright’s interpretation is plausible. On the other hand, it was also Albright who pointed out the many archaisms that date back to Old Babylonian in the language of the Amarna letters. It may be that Abi-milku’s scribe was familiar with the Sumerogram LÚ.GÌR which he either utilised to indicate some officials of whom there could be ten, or he used the ideogram merely in the sense of “man, person”. Very tentatively Moran (1992:235 with n. 1) takes LÚ.GÌR as a logogram for *girseqû*, “palace attendants”. *Girseqû(m)*, a Sumerian loanword, has the meaning of employee of the king and the temple (*AHw*:285).

ABBREVIATIONS (TEXT AND BIBLIOGRAPHY)

Special:

EA: Text references in Knudtzon (1915)

EAS: Rainey (1970)

EAT: Knudtzon (1915)

Wb: Erman-Grapow (1926–1963)

Others:

AHw: Von Soden (1965–1981)

ANET: Pritchard (1955)

AT: Wiseman (1953)

BASOR: Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research

CAD: The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago

⁴⁸ See, inter alia, Dossin (1946-48:322–323) (Mari); Hallo (1957:100–107) GÌR.NITA = *šakkanakku* (Old Babylonian period), and Goetze (1963:1–31); *AHw*:1140 (*GÌR.NITÁ*), Borger (1988:140 n. 337) nisag = *šakkanakku*, “Statthalter”, the same meaning as in *AHw*.

HAL:	Hebräischens und Aramäisches Lexicon zum Alten Testament, dritte Auflage, Leiden (1967–1996)
IEJ:	Israel Exploration Journal
JAOS:	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JCS:	Journal of Cuneiform Studies
JEA:	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology
JESHO:	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
JNES:	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JSS:	Journal of Semitic Studies
KBL:	Koehler-Baumgartner (1953)
MDOG:	Mitteilugen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin
MIO:	Mitteilugen des Institus für Orientforschung
OA:	Oriens Antiquus
OLZ:	Orientalistische Literaturzeitung
PRU II:	Virrolleaud (1957)
PRU IV:	Nougayrol (1956)
RA:	Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archeologie Orientale
RB:	Revue Biblique
RHA:	Revue Hittite et Asihnique
RSO:	Rivista degli Studi Orientali
UF:	Ugarit-Forschungen
VT:	Vetus Testamentum
ZA:	Zeitschrift für Assyriologie
ZAW:	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
Zäs:	Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprace und Altertumskunde
ZDPV:	Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins

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